

REMARKS

The application contains 30 claims. Claims 1, 11 and 21 are independent.

Claims 1-2, 7, 11-12, 17, 21-22 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Tastl et al. (6,993,200); claims 3-5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tastl in view of Ito (5,881,181), and claims 9-10 as being unpatentable over Tastl in view of Change et al. (6,757,645).

Claims 1-2, 6, 11-12, 16, 21-22 and 26 are objected to due to a formal error of using periods in section headers. Claims 6, 16 and 26 stand objected to because they depend on rejected claims.

Claims 1, 11 and 21 are amended to make explicit what was already implicit in the original claims.

Claims 1-5, 11-15 and 21-25 are further amended to change the term *gradient value* to *gradient* to prevent a limited interpretation that the “gradient value” is only a luminance extent.

Claims 1-2, 6, 11-12, 16, 21-22 and 26 are amended to correct the formalities objection, changing section headers with periods to parenthesis headers.

Claim 20 is amended to correct a typographical error, deleting one of two consecutive occurrences of *configured*.

With respect to the anticipation of independent claims 1, 11 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) by Tastl et al. (6,993,200), applicants submit that there is a fundamental difference between the present invention and Tastl concerning the methodology, and therefore the independent claims are not *prima facie* anticipated by the Tastl reference, as discussed below.

Prior to the present amendment, claims 1, 11 and 21 included a “...module configured to generate...*gradient* values in the luminance of the input image”.

Tastl teaches generating *contrast* maps of the input image.

A gradient is a *vector*, having a magnitude and direction, as can be verified in the second paragraph of the Summary of the Invention “...leaving the *directions* of the gradients unchanged”, and in various functions and operators which are respective to the image coordinates (for example, equations 1-6 in pages 8-10).

In contrast, Tastl’s contrast is a *scalar* as verified in equation 3.1 (column 7, lines 12-27).

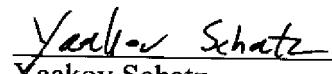
(The emphases above are added and not present in the originals.)

Claims 1, 11 and 21 have been amended with a definition of the gradient as a vector to further clarify the difference between the present invention, as amended, and the Tastl reference. Applicants submit that this amendment only makes explicit what was already implicit in the claims. Thus, claims 1, 11 and 21, at least as amended, are not anticipated by Tastl.

Applicants respectfully maintain that the dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the amended independent claims from which they depend.

An allowance of the claims is respectfully awaited. In the event that the Examiner believes that there are problems which would make it impossible to issue an allowance for all the claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at 1 (877) 428-5468, which is a US toll free number connected directly to our office in Israel (please note the 7 hour time difference and the official work week is from Sunday to Thursday).

Respectfully submitted,  
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